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In This Issue:

President Xi Jinping's Tenure Seems Marked by Ideological Conservatism

In a Fortnight

By Peter Mattis

EXPLORING THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF CHINA'S IDEOLOGICAL CRACKDOWN

The first aphorism of politics is that "all politics is local," and one of the first rules of China watching is to look for domestic factors. The party's domestic focus is highlighted by signs of ideological conservatism and Chinese President Xi Jinping's "China Dream" to build up the state ("Centralized Power Key to Realizing Xi's 'China Dream'," *China Brief*, March 28). The international component of the "China Dream"—becoming a prosperous country with a strong army (*fuguo qiangjun*)—however, is more than just economic and military capability and includes softer issues, such as status and influence. Although the most likely explanations for Beijing's internal crackdown probably still are domestic, China's internal dynamics have an international element linking Xi's return to party orthodoxy with China's threat environment, potentially coloring how Chinese leaders view their foreign relations toward the paranoid. Regardless whether Chinese fears are real, if Beijing acts upon them, they become a genuine concern for China's neighbors.

Prior to his ascension to leadership, all signs pointed to Xi taking a more state-centric approach to running China and there were few indications that he would adopt wide-ranging reform measures—just as the "China Dream" suggests. He unapologetically endorsed socialism with Chinese characteristics and the need for confidence in the Chinese theory, path and system (*lilun zixin*, *daolu zixin*, *zhidu zixin*) (Xinhua, March 17; "The Unrepentant China Model," *China Brief*,

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November 30, 2012; "China in 2012: Politics and Policy of Leadership Succession," *China Brief*, January 20, 2012). This perspective probably is behind Xi's view that the party needs to take a broader view of the organization's history, avoiding the temptation to use the pre- and post-reform experiences to contradict each other (*Guangming Daily*, May 7; *People's Daily*, January 6).This seemingly pro-Maoist sentiment really appears to be more about protecting the party from itself. Similarly, to insulate the party from society's criticism, Xi also has promulgated the "Seven Unmentionables" (*qi bu jiang*)—universal values, freedom of the press, civil society, citizens' rights, the party's historical errors, the capitalist elite and judicial independence—which affects at least teaching and speaking on university campuses (*Ming Pao* [Hong Kong], May 14).

When viewed in combination with articles that seem to whitewash dark periods in party history, such as the Anti-Rightist Movement, that deny the value of the Chinese constitution or that involve a culling (no matter how justified) of party membership, it is hard not to see these developments as being domestically focused (*Global Times*, May 22; *Red Flag*, May 22; *People's Forum Biweekly Political Commentary*, May 18; *South China Morning Post*, May 14). There is, however, an international context to consider, because the preservation of the party is one of the core interests Beijing routinely broadcasts (Xinhua, November 17, 2012; September 6, 2011).

These measures to assert control and encourage a stronger appreciation of the "socialist core values" (*shehui zhuyi jiazhiguan*), however, seem to serve a protective function against ideological subversion from abroad. While the party press maintains a steady background noise on the need to be alert to subversion from "Western hostile forces," Chinese concerns appear to have been rising in recent years, given the concerns about international cultural struggle and the need to propagate China's soft power (*Qiushi*, January 1, 2012; "Plenum Document Highlights Broad Role for Social Management," *China Brief*, October 28, 2011). More recently, the Work Report of the 18th Party Congress noted "Hegemonism, power politics, and neo-interventionism has increased," which not only damages China but also undermines the tenets underpinning the international system (Xinhua, November 17, 2012). A recent editorial also opined Western hostile forces have never stopped trying and probably have increased their efforts to Westernize and divide China. This situation threatens to derail reform during this crucial period as China faces a diverse set of social problems (*People's Daily*, May 22).

Most interestingly, earlier this year, a senior People's Liberation Army (PLA) officer with responsibility for international assessments echoed the concern about subversion, albeit through a less ideological lens. Lieutenant General Qi Jianguo, the deputy chief of the PLA General Staff with the foreign affairs and intelligence portfolio, outlined in a publication of the Central Party School a series of challenges facing China internationally as great power competition intensifies. Foremost among five problems is Western penetration and subversion through "multiple channels, including military deployments, political transformation, economic control, and cultural penetration." While Qi downplayed the usefulness of military power, he did highlight that "soft penetration" can achieve "psychological control," which is a greater long-term challenge. The main development in the U.S. strategic direction is the rebalance toward Asia; however, there is a "contradiction between its objectives being too big and its abilities insufficient. U.S. power is on the decline and leading the Asia-Pacific is beyond its grasp" (*Study Times*, January 21). Given the framework of the article, Qi seems to imply Beijing will need to be more concerned with U.S. efforts to influence China not involving military means to compensate for Washington's decreasing ability to lead the Asia-Pacific on the basis of military power.

One of the other challenges, which Qi warned of, was the rise of "neo-interventionism" (*xin ganshe zhuyi*)—a phenomenon that undermines the principles of sovereignty and equality that have underpinned the international system since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (*Study Times*, January 21). Since the UN-sanctioned intervention in Libya that evolved into regime change, Beijing has been warier of the "responsibility to protect" doctrine promulgated in 2005. An analysis appearing in the official press noted the doctrine subverts the Westphalian contract as well as the principles of the UN charter, because it justifies great power interventions in smaller countries but says nothing of protecting smaller countries from bullying (Xinhua, January 14). Most recently, Chinese Ambassador to the United States, Cui Tiankai, warned against employing the "responsibility to

protect" doctrine, because it is not always clear "who is protecting whom, and who is protecting what" and for what purpose (*Foreign Affairs*, May 15).

A third area of concern relates to non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism and cyber security. The latter, according to Qi, "concerns national sovereignty as well as the security of economic and social operations, and it concerns the quality of human existence…the West's so-called 'Internet Freedom' actually is a type of 'Internet Hegemony'" (*Study Times*, January 21). One of the reasons for Chinese concern, as it appeared in a party journal, is that Internet-based new media remains too independent from the government's efforts to shape public discourse, and some see the Internet-based media as a way to damage the party. Instead, the party needs to find a way to encourage the positive aspects of the new media to help the party perform, just as traditional propaganda apparatus has done for print journalism (*Red Flag*, May 21). The Western approach to Internet freedom denies China what Beijing describes as its sovereign rights over information flows within its country, feeding the aforementioned concerns about subversion and "neo-interventionism."

Chinese society is changing dramatically and forcing the party's governance strategies to evolve along with it. The party's priorities—even with respect to national rejuvenation—remain largely domestic, because Chinese leaders believe the party's survival may be at stake ("Xi Jinping's 'Southern Tour' Reignites Promises of Reform," *China Brief*, December 14). Given the stresses on the party and their potential connections to foreign threats, observers should not draw a clean separation between domestic communist party orthodoxy and Beijing's evaluation of foreign intentions. Nor should observers rule out the possibility that some seemingly domestic measures for restricting public debate and strengthening party rule are related to Chinese perceptions of foreign actions and intentions. No matter how paranoid the idea of foreign subversion in the 21st Century may sound, if Beijing is, in fact, acting upon these concerns, then a more assertive and less placable China probably is the result.

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China's Reform Summed Up: Politics, No; Economics, Yes (Sort of...)

By Willy Lam

A near-schizophrenic bifurcation has informed Chinese-style reform as implemented by the six-month old administration of General Secretary Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang. On the one hand, the preserving stability (*weiwen*) apparatus has pulled out all the stops to shackle dissidents and stymie other "destabilizing elements" in society. With the same strong-armed efficacy with which he has consolidated his hold over the military and police forces, supremo Xi is imposing a quasi-Maoist straitjacket on the ideological arena. On the other hand, more signs have appeared that the Xi-Li leadership is mapping out a package of economic and financial reforms that will be unveiled at the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee scheduled for October or November. Big questions, however, hang over whether genuine and comprehensive economic liberalization is possible in a climate of political repression.

Xi, who is also president and commander-in-chief, indicated soon after taking power at the 18th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress last November that party authorities will do whatever it takes to firm up the people's "self-confidence in the road" (*daolu zixin*) of socialism with Chinese characteristics. There was no bigger threat to the CCP's status as China's "perennial ruling party" than a "calcium deficiency of the spirit" among certain party members (Xinhua, March 17; *People's Daily*, February 16). It is therefore not surprising that commissars in CCP units, including the Propaganda Department, are pushing through draconian measures to prevent Chinese intellectuals, especially college students, from going down what Xi called "the deviant path" of Westernization. In an unpublished internal party document entitled "Concerning the Situation in the Ideological Sphere," the CCP General Office called upon departments handling education, ideology and the media to tackle "seven serious problems in the ideological sphere that merit attention." The circular added that these problems reflected "the sharpness and complexity of struggle in the ideological sphere." What these challenges are is revealed by the fact that the document

asked teaching staff in universities nationwide to steer clear of "seven unmentionable topics" (*qige buyaojiang*): universal values; press freedom; the civil society; citizens' rights; the party's historical aberrations; the "privileged capitalistic class" (*quangui zichan jieji*); and independence of the judiciary (*South China Morning Post* [Hong Kong], May 14; *Apple Daily* [Hong Kong], May 12; Tianya.cn [Beijing], May 10).

Xi, who turns 60 next month, is not the first leader to establish "forbidden zones" for Chinese intellectuals. In his speech in December 2008 commemorating the 30th anniversary of the start of the Era of Reform, then-General Secretary Hu Jintao warned the CCP would never adopt Western norms or "go down paths that involve altering the [party's] flags and standards" (Xinhua, December 18, 2008). Former Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) member and chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Wu Bangguo raised eyebrows in 2011 when he issued the "Five No's" call: "no to multiparty politics; no to diversification of [the party's] guiding thought; no to the separation of powers; no to a federal model; and no to privatization" (China News Service, March 10, 2011). General Secretary Xi, however, has gone further. Firstly, specific instructions have been given to college teachers not to discuss the "seven unmentionables" in class. Similar strictures regarding "seizing control of the lectern" were only laid down and enforced during the first year or so after the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989. A number of leading liberal intellectuals have criticized the new edict as a stunning retrogression. Beijing Institute of Technology economist Wu Xindou pointed out that "this move to bring the *weiwen* campaign to the colleges indicates the party is entering a blind alley." For respected party historian Zhang Lifan, the "seven unmentionables" represented "a return to the days of [Mao's chosen successor] Hua Guofeng, who said that whatever Mao said and did was correct" (Radio Free Asia, May 15; *Ming Pao* [Hong Kong], May 11).

Much more so than previous leaders such as Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, Xi has refused to let party members or ordinary intellectuals talk publicly about aberrations of the CCP, especially those committed by Chairman Mao and his close allies. That Xi is as deferential to Mao as the disgraced Politburo member Bo Xilai became evident just days after he rose to party chief. In a late November speech on the "spirit of the 18th CCP Congress," Xi proclaimed "We must never give up Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought." Otherwise, he warned, "we will lose the foundation [of party rule]" (Xinhua, November 19, 2012; People's Daily Online, November 19, 2012). In a widely-read internal speech delivered in Guangdong Province a month later, the general secretary asserted that a prime reason behind the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) was "the shake-up of beliefs and faith [in party leaders]." Xi stated "The wholesale negation of the history of the Soviet Union and the CPSU, the negation of Lenin and Stalin…spawned historical nihilism and the confusion of thoughts...Various levels of party organizations [in the U.S.S.R.] almost lost all their functions" (People's Daily Online, April 10; *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, February 15). Last January, Xi put forward his now-famous theory that the party should "not differentiate [post-1949 CCP] history into the pre-reform period and the post-reform period." "While socialism with Chinese characters was initiated during the period of the reform and open door, this [creed] was established on the basis of more than 20 years of [socialist] construction [after 1949]," he said, "These two periods should not be [arbitrarily] cut off one from the other—and one period should not be used to negate the other" (*People's Daily*, January 6; Xinhua News Agency, January 5).

Xi's view—which has come to be known as "the theory of the two cannot negates" (*liangge buneng fouding*)—amounted to a no-holds-barred defense of the standing and contributions of Chairman Mao despite the horrific catastrophes of the Anti-Right Movement (1957–59), the Great Leap Forward (1958–61), the Three Years of Famine (1959–62) and the Cultural Revolution (1966–76). In a commentary early this month in the official *Guangming Daily* entitled "The major political significance of 'the theory of the two cannot negates'," party theorist Qi Biao lauded Xi for "correctly upholding and defending party history and consolidating the foundation of party rule." Qi, who is a senior staff in the Party History Research Office of the CCP Central Committee, claimed that, while mistakes were made during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, they were "minor tributaries in the river of time" that did not detract from "the CCP's great attainments" during that epoch. Other articles by conservative ideologues have accused intellectuals who have vilified Mao of indulging in "historical nihilism"

(*Guangming Daily*, May 7; China Review News [Hong Kong], April 19; Global Times Online, January 12; *Qiushi*, January 1).

The problem with this politically-motivated interpretation of history is that, while the CCP propaganda machinery has for the past two decades or so prevented academics from holding conferences and other commemorative events to learn from the mistakes of the Mao period, well-documented books about the disastrous blunders of Mao and his ultra-leftist colleagues have appeared regularly in Hong Kong and abroad. It is perhaps for this reason that the Xi administration has begun a large-scale campaign to whitewash history. In a recent article in the party's theoretical journal *Seeking Truth*, the Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Li Shenming heaped praise on Mao's myriad "political and economic accomplishments." Li blamed "unbalanced media reports" on supposed misperceptions of historical events, such as the Anti-Rightist Movement. Professor Li wrote "During the Anti-Rightist Movement, 550,000 [intellectuals] were labeled rightists, but not a single person was sentenced to death. However, the [campaign] was described as a bloody one by [biased] media." Li also claimed that estimates that more than 30 million Chinese starved to death during the Three Years of Famine were "gross exaggerations" (Sina.com, May 15; *South China Morning Post*, May 14).

While the Xi administration seems to be turning back the clock in the ideological and political fields, pieces of evidence have surfaced to indicate the Xi-Li leadership's commitment to economic reforms—or at least those that will not make a dent in the CCP's overall control of economic resources. The Chinese, Hong Kong and Western media have reported that Xi and Li have asked senior cadres in planning and research departments to come up with reforms in at least seven areas whose leitmotif is boosting the market's contribution to growth. These changes include fine-tuning the monopolistic powers of the 120-odd centrally held state-owned enterprise (SOE) conglomerates (*yangqi*); incrementally loosening state control over interest rates; seeking a more judicious mix of market forces and "macro-economic adjustments" in the determination of the prices of land and other resources; gradually reducing the government's control over capital-account transactions; speeding up full convertibility of the renminbi in the coming decade; encouraging private firms to play a bigger role in the economy; and narrowing the rich-poor gap through means including overhauling the national taxation system. The new initiatives will be folded into a central document on economic reform that is set to be endorsed by the Third CCP Central Committee Plenum slated for late autumn (Caixin.com, May 16; *Apple Daily*, May 14; *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 13; *South China Morning Post*, May 13).

Some of these reformist ideas were discussed in a video conference that Premier Li held on May 13 with regional officials on how to wage a "national mobilization [campaign] for the change of the institutions and functions of the State Council." The 58-year-old head of government and PBSC member made it clear that he was interested in "storming fortresses" so as to realize "big breakthroughs." "We must further stimulate the creative powers of the market and of society," Li noted, "The market is the creator of social wealth. Let go of the powers that should be let go." As examples of curtailing government and boosting the market, Li pledged that "administrative approval procedures" implemented by State Council departments would be slashed by more than one third. Pointing to the fact that some 60 percent of fixed-assets investments come from the non-state sector, Li vowed to provide more of a level playing field for private firms through means such as making available more bank loans and slashing government red tape. The State Council chief also promised to streamline government departments and cut state intervention in order to bolster the market's function in "nurturing superior enterprises and throwing out inefficient ones." "Enterprises must enthusiastically take part in market competition so that they will always be motivated to modernize technology and to create new products," he said (People's Daily Online, May 15; China News Service, May 15).

That Li, who is China's first "Ph.D. prime minister," seems serious about reform is attested by the fact that some inchoate moves are afoot to tackle ingrained malpractices, particularly the monopolistic privileges enjoyed by the *yangqi*—many of which are run by either princelings (kin of party elders) or current and former senior cadres. For example, individual *yangqi's* taxes and other contributions to state coffers will likely be increased by 10 percent this year (China Daily Online, May 8; International Business Times [New York], February 5).

On a deeper level, irreconcilable contradictions persist between the economic goal of nurturing the marketplace and the political imperative of consolidating the CCP's hold on power. For instance, senior cadres and princelings, including Xi, have a vested interest for personal as well as ideological reasons in perpetuating the special powers of vouchsafed SOE groupings in sectors ranging from banking and energy to telecommunications and aerospace ("18th Party Congress to Showcase Rising Status of Private Business," *China Brief*, October 19, 2012). The political sensitivities associated with such control make challenging the status quo difficult if not impossible.

The "seven unmentionables" mentioned above include universal norms, press freedom, civil liberties and the independence of the judiciary, which are deemed integral components of relatively successful market economies in Western as well as Asian countries. For example, corruption—one of the worst scourges of the Chinese economy and society—cannot be effectively eradicated without a free press and a non-party-dominated legal and judicial system. Earlier this month, however, police arrested three Internet whistle blowers, Yuan Dong, Zhang Baocheng and Ma Xinli, for their advocacy of a law obliging senior cadres to disclose their assets and those of their close kin (Canyu.org [Beijing] May 11; Freeweibo.com [Beijing], May 9). This is despite the fact that both Xi and Li have given vague support to just such a "sunshine legislation." Moreover, despite numerous reports by the domestic and Western media that prominent families within the party's elite—including Xi's family—have amassed multi-billion yuan fortunes largely due to their sterling political connections, precious little has been done to pare down the economic base of the red aristocracy. It is perhaps for this reason that the Xi-Li leadership has listed the "privileged capitalist class" as an "unmentionable."

Particularly in comparison to ex-president Hu, who is known for his diffidence and indecisiveness, Xi has striven to strike the pose of a gung-ho strongman who does not mince words. Immediately upon becoming Chairman of the Central Military Commission, he told different units of the People's Liberation Army "to be ready when called upon, to fight effectively and to win wars." On improving party discipline, Xi indicated that "to forge iron, you need a strong hammer." Regarding his favorite concept of "self-confidence in the road [of the party]," the party chief laid down this down-to-earth aphorism: "Where is the road? It's just under our feet." While late patriarch Deng advised his colleagues "to cross the river while feeling out for the boulders," Xi's recommendation as bold as it is straightforward: "Open up a road if you are blocked by mountains; build a bridge if you come across a river" (*Apple Daily*, April 16; Xinhua, November 14, 2012; *People's Daily*, December 5, 2012).

When it comes to sensitive subjects that touch upon the vested interests of the party elite—or the CCP's many failings—the would-be "core of the Fifth-Generation leadership," however, appears evasive if not duplicitous. The same reluctance to go the distance also characterizes a number of initiatives on the economic front. Until the Xi-Li administration can grapple honestly with the many contradictions that have haunted Beijing's political and economic reforms, however, it is difficult to be optimistic about the new leadership's ability to attain the "China Dream" any time soon.

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China's Coexistence Strategy and the Consequences for World Order

By Liselotte Odgaard

China is no longer merely a passive recipient of the world order, but it has become a key factor in determining the foreign and defense policy choices that are open to other international actors. Beijing seems to have positioned the country as a global great power in a political sense. It has achieved this position by means of a strategy of coexistence that was recently reiterated in the Chinese defense white paper (Xinhua, April 16). This strategy is designed to change the context for other states' international behavior without promoting a completely new world order. Instead, China's version of world order is founded in a revised interpretation of the existing UN system, invoking the principles of absolute sovereignty and non-interference. It is an interest-based order designed to protect China against overseas interference and maintain international peace and stability without any obligations for extensive cooperation. Beijing seeks to influence the context more often than directly shaping the behavior of other international actors. This coexistence strategy does not require economic and military capabilities at U.S. levels to exercise this type of influence, because it relies on the persuasiveness of its version of world order as an advantage for others without promoting a China-centric model of interaction.

Coexistence highlights characteristics of China's rise that are overlooked or dismissed in the current discussion. The debate focuses on China's growing economic and military capabilities and to what extent these enhance China's ability to project power in the international system at a great power level. In addition, U.S.-China relations and comparisons are a pervasive feature of the debate. As a consequence, three characteristics concerning China's development and relative position in the international system tend to be overlooked. First, China's economic and military development tells the story of a state that does well in the group of secondary powers, which includes states such as Russia, India and Brazil. Second, China is far from commanding economic and military power at the U.S. level. China's GDP is only one-third the size of the U.S. GDP. The U.S. defense budget is approximately six times as large as China's defense budget. Third, despite this relatively unfavorable position, China's political power is much more comparable to that of the United States.

China's position as a political great power increases the space for action of secondary and small powers. They have extraordinary influence because China offers them strategic partnerships in addition to or instead of the U.S. alliance system. Because both Washington and Beijing vie for their support, the secondary and small powers are able to align with both without choosing sides. The existence of a Chinese version of world order alongside the liberal version presented by the West engenders an international system with two different world orders in place across different issue areas and within the same regions. This type of system implies the absence of one coherent set of principles that universally defines right and wrong international conduct. As a consequence, security threats are addressed by means of *ad hoc* frameworks of conflict management with membership and principles defined on a trial-and-error basis.

According to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, peaceful coexistence involves mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit as well as peaceful coexistence in developing diplomatic relations and economic and cultural exchanges with other countries [1]. These principles correspond to the rules of the UN system of the Cold War, although Beijing interprets the meaning of these principles according to its post-Cold War interests and views of the world.

At a more practical level of implementation, Chinese-style coexistence involves five practices that pervade its foreign relations. The first practice is to only engage with other states on the basis of consent from all governments involved. This practice contrasts with the West's advocacy of UN approval of intervening without regime consent in the event of grave violations of human rights that threaten to derail international peace and stability. A second practice is to discourage the use of force for purposes of conflict management in the international system. This deviates from Western efforts to allow for UN approval of sanctions and peacemaking involving the use of force when a threat to international peace and stability is identified. A third practice is to encourage countries to pursue the national development model which they find

most suitable in view of their history and political set-up. By contrast, the West promotes a liberal economic and political agenda as a model for state-society relations in other states. A fourth practice is to renounce judgment of regimes, encouraging cooperation with all states as the best way to enhanced prosperity for all. The West instead demands the pursuit of basic democratic and human rights standards if a state wants to benefit from economic liberal mechanisms of trade and aid. A fifth practice is to encourage international pluralism by accepting that states act on the basis of different interpretations of right and wrong conduct. This contrasts with Western belief in the universality of liberal economic and political values.

An example of China's practice of coexistence is its UN Security Council policy. China abstained from the UNSC's vote on Resolution 1973 which, acting under the peacemaking provisions of Chapter VII, approved a no-fly zone over Libya and authorized all necessary measures to protect civilians. China's abstention was determined by its preference for peaceful means of conflict management and its concern not to block measures approved by the African Union (AU), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the League of Arab States. On this occasion, China demonstrated its commitment to the non-use of force and regime consent. Additionally, Beijing demonstrated concern for allowing those exposed to the situation in Libya—in this case the organizations encompassing Libya and its neighbors—to decide what to do about it rather than acting on the basis of preconceived value-based notions of right and wrong conduct. Beijing, however, did become more critical as the intervention expanded into an effort to oust the government (*PLA Daily*, April 19, 2011; *Global Times*, March 30, 2011).

In the case of Iran, China recognizes the International Atomic Energy Agencies' (IAEA) conclusion that Iran has enriched uranium and carried out related activities, and that it is likely to have used non-declared plutonium. According to Beijing, however, Iran has no proven nuclear weapons capability and its nuclear program remains within the bounds of its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commitments. China has advocated that other countries recognize Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy (Xinhua, November 18, 2011; www.chinesemission-vienna.at, August 9, 2005). Beijing also has continued to cooperate with Iran on energy while the issue of Iran's nuclear program has been an item on the UNSC agenda. Moreover, the Chinese approach has featured Beijing's endorsement of *ad hoc* multilateral discussions to diffuse tensions, making this an exemplar of the coexistence strategy in action (Xinhua, March 7, 2012; November 18, 2011).

With regard to Syria, Beijing has aimed to decouple regime issues from the need to establish peace and security. China vetoed the UNSC resolution proposing endorsement of the peace plan of the League of Arab States. China has recognized the plan as a useful way ahead, but its requirement that President Bashar al-Assad hand over power to a deputy sets the unacceptable precedent of ignoring the consent of political authorities on how to establish domestic peace and security (China-U.S. Focus, February 29, 2012). China has endorsed non-binding UNSC presidential statements on Syria calling for the cessation of violence to restore civil and political rights (Xinhua, April 19; United Nations, May 27, 2012). By endorsing the criticism of the conduct of Assad's government against civilians within their sovereign jurisdiction, China tries to demonstrate that it does not approve of the human rights atrocities taking place in Syria. Such atrocities, however, will be much worse in the long run if a precedent is set for UNSC approval of intervention in domestic affairs involving regime change (*Foreign Affairs*, May 15; Xinhua, January 14; *People's Daily*, May 11, 2011). Instead, impartiality with regards to regimes should continue to determine the limits of intervention and Chinese statements surrounding its vetoes reinforce this approach (Xinhua, February 5, 2012; October 5, 2011).

The Chinese coexistence model is an interest-based version of world order with no domestic model for state-society relations comparable to the way the U.S.-led liberal international order encourages representative democracy. The Confucian notion of "harmonious society" remains a rhetorical device without much practical applicability. The idea has not been translated into essential political structures, such as feedback mechanisms from society to government, or into processes, such as wide-spread use of popular elections to facilitate political succession. The absence of a political model to complement China's market economic transition means that the Chinese government relies on continued economic growth and improved standards of living for regime legitimacy. The lack of new thinking regarding how to design

state-society relations also implies that Beijing relies on random feedback mechanisms of protest and complaint and on coercion for dealing with societal dissatisfaction. Such practices damages China's image as a peaceful great power.

Another implication of China's pluralist version of world order is that no one knows by which value standard to measure China's performance. Hence, China's objectives as a prospective great power remain unknown beyond those of maintaining national unity and restoring the Chinese motherland. This nationalist theme calls into question Beijing's genuine commitment to its coexistence strategy, because it entails encroaching on the claimed rights of other states to sovereignty and freedom of movement in areas such as the South and East China Seas ("Soothing Tones on China's Rise Strike Dissonance," *China Brief*, January 4). Such issues hamper Beijing's efforts to win a stable group of loyal partners that might threaten the coherence of Washington's alliance system. Since China does not appear as an attractive dominant great power to most states, the majority continue to rely on U.S. security guarantees and probably will do so for the foreseeable future.

Despite these reservations about the success of China's coexistence strategy, the dominant theme is that China has been able to promote coexistence as a basis for world order on a global scale and in all the world's regions. Coexistence has developed into a steadily more effective strategic doctrine for advocating international political pluralism as an alternative to the liberal integration pursued by the United States. Coexistence allows many regimes to coordinate their national interests without jeopardizing international peace and stability. This has proven most effective in allowing China to continue with a predominantly inward-looking focus designed to concentrate on its domestic social, economic and military development so as to ensure its rise to full-blown great power status. The Chinese government's 2013 defense white paper—like many previous white papers and foreign policy statements—lists peaceful coexistence as a central instrument in pursuing China's principal security interests (Xinhua, April 16; September 6, 2011; *People's Daily*, June 28, 2004). This continuity strongly indicates that China will continue to rely on coexistence as a principal strategy for promoting China's interests in future.

From a Western perspective, Beijing's alternative version of world order presents some challenges to existing state practice. China's network of economic and political-strategic relations across all the world's regions testifies to the emergence of a Chinese coexistence-alternative to the U.S. alliance system that pervades all regions. Secondary and small powers often welcome this alternative to Western influence. It allows them to side with one power on some issues and with another power on other issues, encouraging the continued prevalence of both orders without clear geographical dividing lines or regional spheres of influence. This development challenges Western efforts to couple demands for liberal political reform in return for economic and political-strategic cooperation. This challenge encourages Washington and its allies to focus on revitalizing their economic and financial capabilities and partnerships to try to match the fact that Chinese influence is based on a successful coupling of a domestic model of market economic reform with an authoritarian political system. Furthermore, China's willingness to engage with developing countries pronounced pariah states by the West encourages the United States and its allies to reconsider the utility and affordability of major overseas engagements with ambitious political objectives such as nation-building.

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Notes:

1. "Preamble", Constitution of the People's Republic of China, December 4, 1982, available online <http://www.english.people.com.cn/constitution/constitution.html>.

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Missile Defense with Chinese Characteristics

By Michael S. Chase

On January 27, 2013, China conducted its second mid-course missile defense interceptor test, leading to considerable speculation among Chinese and Western analysts about Beijing's motives and intentions as well as its plans for further development of mid-course intercept technology and possible deployment of its own missile defense system. Given Beijing's longstanding and vehement opposition to U.S. missile defense programs—which it charges damages strategic stability and undermines China's security by raising doubts about the effectiveness of its nuclear deterrent—it would seem logical that China would refrain from pursuing similar capabilities ("China Steps Up Rhetoric Against U.S. Missile Defense," *China Brief*, October 19, 2012). Somewhat ironically, however, even as Chinese officials have continued to criticize the United States for conducting research on and activities related to missile defense, China has been developing its own missile defense technology. Indeed, over the past three years, Beijing has conducted two missile defense interception tests—both of which were accompanied by brief official statements—and Chinese analysts have suggested a number of potential directions for China's missile defense program.

China's Missile Defense Interception Tests

China conducted the first of its two missile defense interception tests on January 11, 2010. China's official Xinhua News Service released a brief statement that provided only very limited information on the test. The statement read "On January 11, 2010, China conducted a test on ground-based midcourse missile interception technology within its territory. The test has achieved the expected objective. The test is defensive in nature and is not targeted at any country" (Xinhua, January 11, 2010). At a Foreign Ministry press conference the next day, a spokeswoman repeated the themes contained in the brief official statement that followed the test. In an attempt to distinguish it from China's January 2007 ASAT test, the spokeswoman added that the missile defense test did not leave any debris in space or pose a threat to the safety of any orbiting spacecraft (Xinhua, January 12, 2010). Beijing's strategic communication plan following the January 2010 missile defense interceptor test clearly represented a major improvement compared to the confusion and awkward silence that followed China's January 2007 ASAT test, but Chinese official and unofficial statements still left many key questions unanswered [1].

Following China's second missile defense interception test, which was conducted in January 2013, Chinese official media carried a brief report confirming that it had taken place, but the statement provided only limited information on the results and almost no insight into China's rationale for the development of its own missile defense technology. The report stated that China "again carried out a land-based mid-course missile interception test within its territory." It quoted a Ministry of National Defense spokesman, who stated the test was "defensive in nature" and not targeted at any other country, and indicated the test "reached the preset goal" (Xinhua, January 28). The report also described the test as similar to the one that China successfully carried out in January 2010, but offered no further details. Other official media reports echoed the theme that the test was defensive and was not targeted at any specific country.

Another theme highlighted by some official media reports was the technical complexity of China's missile defense tests. One Xinhua report stated that such tests demonstrate "highly complicated technologies in detecting, tracking and destroying a ballistic missile flying in the [sic] outer space." The report described the successful anti-missile test, "together with a string of other military equipment progress," including the sea trials of China's first aircraft carrier and the test flight of a developmental large transport aircraft, as a reflection of China's growing military power. Specifically, it stated these developments "demonstrated the country's fast-growing ability to defend its own national security and deter any possible threats" (Xinhua, January 28). In addition, separate media reports lauded Beijing's disclosure of the test as a sign of China's "increasing transparency in military affairs" (Xinhua, January 28). Yet the official reports provided no insight into the strategic rationale for China's investment in missile defense technology, the PLA's plans for future tests or Beijing's thinking about the potential operational deployment of missile defense systems.

Motives and Implications

Although China publicly announced both of its missile defense tests, it has not provided any official explanation of its motives for the development of missile defense technology or its plans for the deployment of missile defense capabilities. Chinese official statements thus have raised more questions than they have answered. Nonetheless, knowledgeable Chinese observers suggest there are at least three paths Beijing could follow in the future: (1) continue to refine its missile defense technology while refraining from deploying an operational system; (2) deploy a national missile defense system intended to protect the entire country, at least from a small-scale ballistic missile attack (like the current U.S. national missile defense system); or (3) deploy a small number of missile defense interceptors in a point defense role, to provide some level of protection for key strategic targets such as its ICBMs or strategic command and control facilities [2].

As for the first potential way forward, following China's second missile defense test, Li Bin, a well-known Chinese scholar who specializes in nuclear strategy and arms control issues, suggested that Beijing was likely focusing on technology development in an attempt to "assess capabilities" rather than planning to deploy a national missile defense system. Furthermore, in Li's words, "China's 2010 and 2013 missile intercept tests demonstrated that the country had acquired [hit-to-kill] technology, but that does not mean China has a conceptual missile defense system that can target incoming missiles from any specific country."

Perhaps the least likely outcome would be deployment of a full-scale national missile defense system. As Li Bin puts it, "In the U.S.-Chinese context, it would be very inefficient for China to deploy a national missile defense system to counter U.S. offensive nuclear forces. If the Chinese want to use a national missile defense system to limit the damage caused by U.S. strategic missiles, they will need many more interceptors than the United States would need for the same purpose. China would have to pay much more money than United States to build up its capability. Moreover, such a missile defense system, if it contained enough interceptors, would have broader costs as well—the same negative impact as the U.S. national missile defense system currently does on U.S.-Chinese strategic stability." Even one modeled after that of the United States and capable only of intercepting a small number of incoming warheads would seem to be a poor fit for China's strategic circumstances.

If Chinese leaders intend to deploy an operational missile defense system, a point defense system designed to defend a handful of small areas against ballistic missile attack would seem a more logical and affordable approach. According to Li Bin, a point defense system would represent "a much more reasonable choice than a national missile defense system for China if it decides to develop its hit-to-kill technology into a missile defense system." Li suggests that a point defense system could be used to protect Chinese command and control centers, and thus to ensure that "Chinese political and military leaders would survive a surprise preemptive nuclear strike so that they could direct a retaliatory nuclear strike." According to Li, such a system "could also be used to protect some of China's strategic nuclear weapons and increase their survivability." Indeed, Li's earlier work has highlighted the possibility that point defense systems could enhance the survivability of China's silo-based ICBMs.

In contrast to the potentially destabilizing effects of a broader national missile defense system, Li writes, "a point defense system would make China's nuclear deterrent more credible and ensure its strategic stability with other nuclear-armed countries." This assessment appears to track closely with the post-test comments of military officers who suggested that defensive capabilities would improve the survivability of China's strategic nuclear forces. Although none of these comments specified an exact role for China's mid-course missile defense interceptors, they would appear to be consistent with their employment in a point defense role, probably protecting Chinese ICBMs. China's approximately 20 silo-based ICBMs would seem to be the best candidates for this purpose, given that China presumably sees them as much more vulnerable to a first-strike than its road-mobile ICBMs. In addition, employing missile defense in this role could be less difficult—and less expensive—than trying to deploy even a limited national missile defense system. Indeed, Li Bin suggests that compared to a national system, a point defense system would have more modest technical requirements and a much lower cost.

If China pursues the deployment of a missile defense system, it will need more than ground-based interceptors. As Chinese analysts have noted, Beijing also will need complementary capabilities, such as ballistic missile early warning satellites (*Hubei Daily*, January 28). China currently lacks early warning satellites like the U.S. Defense Support Program (DSP) and Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS) satellites.

As for the broader implications of China's missile defense program, Chinese analysts suggest it will strengthen, rather than undermine strategic deterrence. Beijing continues to object to missile defense systems it sees as strategically destabilizing (most notably, those of the United States), but it apparently does not see its own missile defense system as problematic from this perspective. Indeed, Chinese analysts do not appear to be concerned that China's development of missile defense will trigger an arms race. So long as China limits its missile defense deployments to a point defense role, continues to adhere to its longstanding "No First Use" (NFU) policy and maintains a nuclear force posture clearly oriented toward retaliatory missions, this thinking does not contradict China's broader position on missile defense. Thus, Beijing can make the case that its own missile defense program is not inconsistent with its argument that missile defense systems potentially capable of negating an adversary's strategic deterrent are destabilizing, especially when coupled with first strike doctrines and capabilities.

Underscoring the extent to which Beijing's development of missile defense technology is linked to China's other strategic weapons programs, some Chinese analysts have characterized China's missile defense program as an emerging element of China's overall strategic deterrence posture. For example, after the January 2013 missile defense test, Senior Colonel Shao Yongling of the PLA Second Artillery Force Command College told the official Communist Party newspaper *People's Daily* that China's development of mid-course missile intercept technology shows "the country's strategic deterrence system is shifting from relying merely on offensive weapons to integrating offensive and defensive weapons." Shao suggested that missile defense would allow China to continue to "maintain a relatively small number of nuclear weapons given its increasing defensive capabilities." Specifically, in Shao's words, "as long as enough nuclear weapons survive first-strike attacks, China can carry out nuclear retaliation against the attacker. Therefore, strong defensive capabilities are of great significance to the country's national security" (*People's Daily*, January 30).

China's development of missile defense technology has received less attention from scholars who follow Chinese military modernization than Beijing's modernization of its nuclear force and its development of offensive counter-space capabilities [3]. China's two missile defense intercept tests—and the comments of Chinese analysts linking them to Beijing's ongoing attempts to strengthen its strategic deterrence capabilities—however, suggest that U.S. analysts should pay very close attention to Chinese missile defense developments.

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Notes:

1. James Mulvenon, "Evidence of Learning? Chinese Strategic Messaging Following the Missile Defense Intercept Test," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 31, available online <http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/CLM31JCM.pdf>.
2. Li Bin, "What China's Missile Intercept Test Means," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 4, 2013, available online <http://carnegieendowment.org/2013/02/04/what-china-s-missile-intercept-test-means/fa45>.
3. For one notable exception, see Kevin Pollpeter, "China's Second Ballistic Missile Defense Test: A Search for Strategic Stability," SITC Bulletin Analysis, February 2013, available online <http://igcc.ucsd.edu/assets/001/504391.pdf>.

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Xinjiang's April 23 Clash the Worst in Province since July 2009

By Raffaello Pantucci

On April 24, reports emerged from Xinjiang that 21 people had been killed in what was reported as a "terrorist clash" in Bachu County, Kashgar Prefecture (Xinhua, April 24). The incident came as U.S. Ambassador to Beijing Gary Locke was undertaking the first visit to the province by a senior U.S. delegation in 20 years as part of Beijing's push to attract foreign investment to the province (*Xinjiang Daily*, April 25). The juxtaposition of the two events highlighted Beijing's persistent difficulties in taming the province's tensions. They call into question Beijing's economics-based strategy while illustrating the ongoing questions about the drivers of radicalization in the province.

Initial descriptions about the events in Selibuya village in Bachu County (also known as Maralbexi) just outside Kashgar, suggested the incident was the product of a "violent clash between suspected terrorists and authorities" (Xinhua, April 24). Three community workers were described as entering a property and finding suspicious individuals with knives. They managed to alert others, but were killed before help could arrive. This lead to a larger clash in which a total of 15 police and community workers were killed while six so-called "mobsters" were shot to death (*Xinjiang Daily*, April 24; *Shanghai Daily*, April 24). The 15 dead were heralded later as "martyrs" and identified by their ethnicities as 10 Uighur, three Han and two Mongolians (Xinhua, April 29). Grim pictures released in the days after the funerals seemed to show females identified as cadres with their throats slit (CCTV13, April 30).

Xinjiang government spokeswoman Hou Hanmin quickly blamed the incident as being the work of terrorists (Reuters, April 24). Two days later after U.S. State Department spokesman Patrick Ventrell refused to call it terrorism, an editorial lashed out at U.S. "double standards," something felt all the more keenly in the wake of the Boston bombings in which a Chinese student was killed (Xinhua, April 26). A few days later, security forces announced they had arrested a further 11 suspects for involvement in the incident, bringing the total number of captured individuals to 19 (Xinhua, April 29). In making this announcement, the government laid out its claim that they had disrupted a terrorist cell headed by Qasim Muhammat (also spelt Kasmu Memet) that had been founded in September 2012 and was in the process of planning "something big" this summer in Kashgar (Xinhua, April 29). The group allegedly would gather at cell member Muhanmetemin Barat's house where they would do physical training, watch extremist videos, read the Koran and practice making explosives (Xinhua, April 29). The group was in the process of making explosives at the house when the three community workers came visiting leading to the incident (Xinhua, April 29).

According to an official timeline released by the government, one of the members of the cell, Musar Aisanjon, had first come to security officials' attention in July 2007 when he was questioned by authorities linked to unspecified charges. Three years later, he is alleged to have met Qasim Muhammat, who subsequently went on to recruit the other members of the cell (*China Daily*, April 30). By September 2012, the group was formed and under Qasim's lead were gathering regularly to train, listen and watch radical material and make knives. By the time of the incident, they allegedly had tested explosives five times. When authorities subsequently raided the properties, they uncovered knives, combat training equipment, illegal religious material and three jihadist flags along with at least one identified as being an "East Turkestan" banner (Xinhua, April 29; *China Daily*, April 30). Nevertheless, a few days later spokeswoman Huo Hanmin went on record saying that the incident and individuals involved "had no connection with foreign forces" in contrast to many previous incidents where external influences were blamed (*China Daily*, May 2).

This official version of events was disputed remotely by dissident groups through Radio Free Asia, where they called for independent coverage of the story (RFA, May 3). A BBC crew was able to get to Selibuya and spoke to locals who said a family that was at the center of the clash had "a long-standing dispute with officials." Apparently very religious, the family was under pressure to shave their beards and for their women to unveil themselves—something that was apparently in accordance with local laws. The family refused and something snapped on April 23 leading to the brutal incident (BBC, April 26). Little of this account beyond the end result was corroborated by official Chinese reports, leaving observers in the usual

frustrating state of confusion when observing such incidents in Xinjiang.

Waters were further muddied when RFA—citing Uighur websites, local sources and dissident groups—reported that there had been a further incident in Hotan, Xinjiang during which two more community workers were killed and three cars burned in an incident sparked off by clampdowns in the wake of the Selibuya deaths (RFA, April 26). No further information has emerged about this incident. Other incidents reported by RFA in subsequent days (and not corroborated elsewhere) showed tensions between Uighur and Han across the country. One report indicated there had been a clash between Uighur and Han students at Beijing's Minorities University leading to the authorities separating the two communities on campus (RFA, April 29). Meanwhile in Shanghai, a group of Uighur women protesting their being banned from selling products outside the Changde Lu Mosque, reportedly were moved along violently by local authorities (RFA, May 3). It is unclear if there is any connection between all of these events and whether these are anything more than usual intra-ethnic tensions. They do, however, highlight a persistent issue.

A contact in Kashgar at around the time of the incident reported no particular local coverage of events, with locals suggesting they return to Urumqi rather than press on toward the borders near Kashgar. Another report indicated that the government had re-issued laws regulating possession of SIM cards in the region (RFA, April 30). Such laws had been issued previously in conjunction with other rioting when it was believed that dissemination of pictures of Han or Uighur brutality against each other had exacerbated tensions. By having people registering SIM cards against ID cards, the belief was that individuals could be tracked.

While possibly sensible from a security surveillance perspective, such measures are impediments to rapid transfer of information. Something that when taken in conjunction with the confusion that permeates the official accounts of the events in Selibuya suggests that the government is going to continue to have a difficult time in attracting the external investment that it is looking for to develop the province. External investors will be both alarmed by the security situation, but also the heavily watched environment and the impediments to obtain SIM cards.

According to 2012 trade figures, during the first 11 months of 2012, Xinjiang attracted some $396 million in foreign direct investment (FDI)—a figure up 30.8 percent year-on-year—but still paltry when put in the context of the $100.02 billion that China overall attracted during the same period (Xinhua, December 21, 2012). Eager to attract foreign firms, the Xinjiang government has been proactive in bringing foreign companies out to the province. It has signed a cooperation agreement with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI); Volkswagen has established a joint venture car factory outside Urumqi; French waste management firm Veolia is taking on the modernization of Urumqi's wastewater infrastructure; Coca-Cola is opening a plant in the province with its bottling partner Cofco; IBM is working with authorities in Karamay to develop a "smart city"; Danish wind power manufacturer LM Glasfiber setting up a factory in the Urumqi Economic and Technological Development Zone; and Turkey signed an agreement in 2011 to develop a Sino-Turkish Development Park outside Urumqi (www.cbi.org.uk, January 28; *China Daily*, November 14, 2012; *South China Morning Post*, April 3, 2012; *China Daily*, August 16, 2011; www.finance.veolia.com, September 1, 2005). More recently, the U.S. delegation visiting with Ambassador Locke had representatives from GE, the Aluminium Company of America (Alcoa), DuPont, Cummins and Peabody Energy Corporation (*Xinjiang Daily*, April 25).

All of this activity, however, does not seem to be translating into a huge pay-off on the ground as external investment remains relatively low. Foreign firms wonder about the prospects in the wake of incidents like that in Selibuya as well as practical concerns like the province's still underdeveloped infrastructure and its distance from any bodies of water or markets. The annual China-Eurasia Expo held in Urumqi in September, for example, is intended as a further FDI booster, but most of the deals done are between Chinese firms. During the 2011 Expo, $29.14 billion in deals were signed with Chinese firms versus $5.5 billion in foreign trade contracts (Xinhua, September 3, 2012).

What does seem to have changed, however, is the government's willingness to blame incidents like that in Selibuya on outside actors (something attested to by Huo Hanmin's earlier clarifications). In a number of discussions over the past year, the author has heard Chinese scholars suggest that incidents in Xinjiang are at root domestic problems rather than external ones [2]. Xinjiang Party Secretary Zhang Chunxian published an article in *Seeking Truth* following the wake of the Bachu incident in which he laid out the current context and strategy for developing Xinjiang. Hinting at a slight adjustment in the degree to which authorities are eager to blame outside forces, Zhang described the security problems in terms of social stability and development rather than blaming foreign elements (Qiushi, May 16). In keeping with the reported paranoia of the security services, an anonymous Xinjiang security official, however, said "The 'three evil forces' of separatism, extremism and terrorism have long been using mobile phones and the Internet to incite terrorist attacks in China" (Xinhua, May 17). The party secretary's article stands in contrast to statements in response to previous incidents where outside groups were accused of directing plotters and infiltrating operatives.

Further confusing matters, at around the time of the incident, the Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP) released its latest batch of videos through Islam Awazi, including one in which a now believed dead senior al Qaeda ideologue, Abu Zaid al-Kuwaiti provides "advice for the Muslims of East Turkestan" (jihadology.net, May 4). At no point in these videos is there any mention of recent incidents in Xinjiang or of any specific direct threats against targets in China. Something suggestive of a disconnect between what Uighur groups operate in Waziristan and their ethnic brethren in Xinjiang. The narrative of this incident further emphases this discontent, pointing in the direction of being a domestic clash with no external instigation.

The fact that government has chosen to release such detailed information about this incident would suggest an effort to get their side out with as much detail and openness as possible. This reflects the growing desire of propagandists to have official government bureaus be the most authoritative source on breaking events (*Study Times*, May 6). This public relations approach seems to be part of a broader effort to shift the messaging about who is to blame for such incidents. Who this is directed at, however, is unclear: the international community, Chinese residents elsewhere in the country or residents of Xinjiang? Whichever the case, given their previous history of opacity and conflicting views from the ground, much more still needs to be done for Beijing's views on events in Xinjiang to be taken at face value.

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Notes:

1. Author's Communication with Foreign Visitor in Kashgar, April 24, 2013.
2. This is a perspective the author has heard at conferences at official think tanks in Beijing and Shanghai and has been corroborated by other foreign scholars in discussions with Chinese experts looking at terrorism questions and South Asia.

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